

Communication and Dissemination

Terms of Reference

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I. Objectives

The Topical Group Communication and Dissemination (C&D) is one of the twenty groups collegially selected to represent key strategic topics for European Universities alliances. The Community of Practice (CoP) topical groups build upon and further develop the work initiated by the subgroups of the informal FOR-EU network since 2020.

This topical group aims to formalise and expand the current activities of the Community of Practice of Communication Officers and Heads of Communication. By doing so, the main objectives of Topical Group C&D are:

- to improve the already fruitful collaboration between alliance communicators.
- to share best practices and reinforce peer learning and collaboration.
- to support WP4 with specific needs for the expansion of the organisation of joint actions and in doing so, to increase the visibility, reach and engagement potential of alliances' positions, advocacy initiatives and dissemination of results.
- to organise joint training programmes that go beyond the thematic expertise of communicators and help link them to other areas of FOREU4ALL.
- to reinforce the sense of belonging among members of the group and with them, of the general Alliances' community to formalise our recurrent meetings and allow for more structured participation of members.
- to encourage innovation and new forms of collaboration.

The expected concrete outputs and results of the Communication and Dissemination Topical Group during 2025 and 2026 are:

- **Short-term outputs:**
 - A strengthened presence of the European Universities alliances in the EAIE 2025 in Gothenburg (9 to 12 September 2025), by supporting specific needs.
 - Enhanced impact of alliances through joint actions to prepare for EAIE 2025, by giving support to initiatives such as the European Universities alliances flyer.
 - Dissemination of FOREU4ALL initial publications and posts via alliances channels.
 - Increased project visibility through the display of the FOREU4ALL logo, description, and relevant URLs on alliance websites, based on each alliance's preferences¹.
 - Development of a proposal for an onsite workshop led by the Communication and Dissemination Group, in collaboration with other topical groups, to promote cross-cutting dialogue and collaboration.

¹ The implementation of FOREU4ALL branding elements, such as the logo, project description, and relevant URLs, is subject to the discretion of each alliance, which retains autonomy in determining the timing and manner of their integration, in line with individual communication strategies and institutional priorities. Each alliance can decide, whether they want to keep the EUI logo or not.

- **Middle-term outputs:**
 - Continued sharing of best practices about key topics for the alliances' communication officers, such as how to communicate the Erasmus+ or other projects and storytelling about European Universities alliances during the Topical Group's monthly meetings. Create tangible outputs with different designs (depending on the needs, the topical group will design brochures, booklets, e-books, documents, etc.).
 - Workshop sessions or webinars on key issues regarding the impact of European Universities alliances or any other communication needs in collaboration with the FOREU4ALL Impact topical group or other relevant partners.
 - Collaborative campaigns to enhance outreach of selected topics (European Elections, joint events, etc.).
 - Joint dissemination actions, in collaboration with FOREU4ALL's WP4, to increase the impact of alliances on a European and international level.
 - Involvement of the Communication officers of the alliances that do not have yet a representative in the group.
 - Further possible contributions to workshops:
 - How to increase the impact of European Universities alliances, in coordination with the Impact Group, leading this subject.
 - External engagement through communication.
 - Internal engagement and facilitation of the Alliance's Integration at the institutional level through communication, in collaboration with other topical groups like Community Engagement or the Student-led Community.
 - Students as narrators of the EUAs story, in collaboration with topical groups for Community Engagement and Student-led Community.
 - New participants (from new alliances) informed of the best practices we have already gathered during the previous years.
 - Possibility of joint participation in other events.

II. Background

The Communication Group was formed as an informal initiative by Communication Officers from various European Universities alliances (EUAs). Participants first convened in Versailles on June 30, 2022, during the French Council Presidency's closing ceremony, an event promoting transnational cooperation in higher education.

Initially organised via WhatsApp, it evolved into a structured network with monthly meetings to discuss common challenges. Key initiatives include a joint newsletter (March 2023) and some of the EUAs participation at EAIE 2022.

A significant milestone was reached during an in-person meeting during the EAIE 2023 conference, where more alliances participated with booths and delegations. This gathering underscored the group's importance, paving the way for a stronger collective presence at EAIE 2024, complete with coordinated activities, promotional materials, and joint social media campaigns. The Comms Group also co-organised the event "Internationalisation of European Universities Alliances: The New Frontiers", hosted by the University of Toulouse and the Région Occitanie. This event featured sessions on how and why European Universities alliances are building strategic partnerships beyond the EU, demonstrating how the group cooperates and promotes initiatives collectively.

The group also created a dedicated leaflet explaining the EUA initiative and launched a survey to assess its impact. In addition to coordinating events, the Comms Group fosters ongoing dialogue, providing a collaborative space for sharing insights, developing joint initiatives, and supporting communication efforts across the alliances. The group's continued development reflects the growing need for structured cooperation in promoting the European Universities initiative.

III. Work plan and working modalities

Governance and participation

The Chairing Team will oversee organising C&D Topical group meetings, minutes and agendas, also to ensure transparency and information sharing. Nevertheless, this topical group aims to be a bottom-up structure where members can propose, co-lead and execute projects.

The primary objective is to facilitate meaningful monthly discussions focused on the practical challenges faced by alliance members, providing a collaborative platform for sharing best practices and jointly exploring potential solutions. Additionally, the group aims to organise thematic workshops in collaboration with key FOREU4ALL areas, including student engagement, the promotion of educational opportunities, and the use of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, for communication and dissemination purposes. To ensure coordination and alignment across activities, participation of selected topical group members in WP4 meetings will be arranged.

To ensure a participatory approach to the modus operandi of the C&D topical group, open forms have been developed, to gather input from all members. These forms invite:

- Proposals for agenda points and topics for peer discussions during monthly meetings, aimed at addressing key challenges, questions, and shared experiences;
- Suggestions for workshops to be organised within the framework of FOREU4ALL.

Objections, concerns, and alternative proposals, for all meetings and activities within the topical group, are encouraged and welcomed. These can be raised through both more formal channels (e.g., email) and informal means (such as ad hoc agenda items during meetings). All inputs serve as a basis for open discussion, with the goal of reaching a compromise or consensus that reflects the majority view of the group. Participation in proposed actions remains voluntary, and no alliance is obliged to implement specific outcomes.

Subgroups within the C&D Topical Group

For specific events or activities, the group will establish or maintain smaller, task-oriented subgroups to ensure efficient distribution of responsibilities. These sub-groups will focus on defined aspects such as event organisation, campaign planning, or content development, enabling timely progress and structured input before outcomes are shared with the wider group. For example, an ad hoc branding sub-group may be formed to support specific design or communication issues of strategic importance to alliance communication managers. Additional sub-groups may be created as needed, depending on the topical focus, available expertise, and the availability of members.

Meeting and organisation

Monthly meetings remain a key aspect of the group's work. To optimise their effectiveness, a new format has been introduced: the first 45 minutes focus on updates regarding ongoing activities, while the second 45 minutes provide space for Q&A, discussions, or presentations on topics of shared interest. This ensures that meetings remain efficient, relevant, and beneficial for all.

Additionally, an ongoing email thread will continue to serve as a key communication channel, keeping all members informed about developments, deadlines, and upcoming opportunities. This multi-channel approach—combining MS Teams, email, and structured meetings— aims to enhance collaboration, streamline workflow, and foster stronger connections between the alliances.

Considerations on Equality & Diversity in organisational modalities

The topical group will keep with the values of multiculturalism, inclusion and cross-border collaboration, already embedded in our alliances, this group will continue to be formed by the members designated by each alliance. This allows for a geographical and cultural diversity within the Communication and Dissemination group.

Regarding the work dynamics of the group, we always count on participants to be active and highly encourage all alliances to take part in the different sub-groups and ad-hoc initiatives. With this, we try to avoid a centralisation of the actions and promote a diversification of the leadership. This approach helps create a dynamic and representative group that reflects diverse perspectives while working collectively toward effective communication and dissemination strategies.

IV. Inputs to WP3 Policy Dialogue & WP4 Communication and Dissemination

The Communication and Dissemination Topical Group will support the successful implementation of FOREU4ALL with active involvement of the European University alliances.

In this sense, the FOREU4ALL Communication Officer is invited to participate in the Communication and Dissemination Topical Group monthly meetings in order to keep its members informed about any relevant actions and decisions and get their advice in the communication and dissemination activities. The Chair and deputy chairs of the Communication and Dissemination topical group are invited to participate in the FOREU4ALL WP4 meetings.

Furthermore, the Communication and Dissemination team of the community will disseminate the most relevant communication and dissemination items of alliances (after a selection procedure via the FOREU4ALL form) to amplify alliances' visibility and impact.

The Topical Group on Communication and Dissemination selected in the WP2 call will have a key role in advising on communication aspects. The synergies between this topical group and WP4 are detailed as follows:

“The group has an advisory role in the FOREU4ALL Community of Practice in terms of communication matters. The group and the alliances involved will amplify the reach of dissemination outputs by acting as multipliers of the FOREU4ALL dissemination outputs.”

In summary, the C&D Topical Group has specific, additional competences/tasks than other topical groups in regards of FOREU4ALL and WP4:

- The group acts as an advisory board of the FOREU4ALL for communication & dissemination matters.
- The group and the alliances involved act as multipliers for the FOREU4ALL dissemination outputs.
- The group and the alliances involved can also act as providers of content for the FOREU4ALL communication (alliances' events, offers, dissemination outputs).

The topical group on C&D acts as an advisory body to the FOREU4ALL WP4 when requested. It brings expertise to WP4 decisions and can propose alternatives to the options elaborated by WP4. It does not have decision-making prerogatives.

V. Members

Expected profile of topical group members:

- Communication managers and officers that are responsible for the alliance-wide strategic communication and planning. They are appointed by their Alliance's highest representatives in FOREU4ALL (Secretary Generals, General Managers, Alliance coordinators or similar position).
- In the absence of a communication manager or officer, the coordinator or another representative can join the group, but it is highly recommended to have a communication expert for each alliance.

Number of participants per alliance:

- Ideally, participation in the topical group will be limited to only have 2 representatives for each alliance as a maximum.